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IN MEMORIAM.

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STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;
Thou madest Life in man and brute ;
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :
Thou madest man, he knows not why ;
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And thou hast made him : thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
 The highest, holiest manhood, thou :
 Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
 Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
 They have their day and cease to be :
 They are but broken lights of thee,
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;
 For knowledge is of things we see ;
 And yet we trust it comes from thee,
 A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
 But more of reverence in us dwell ;
 That mind and soul, according well,
 May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
 We mock thee when we do not fear :
 But help thy foolish ones to bear ;
 Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me ;
 What seemed my worth since I began ;
 For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
 Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
 I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
 Confusions of a wasted youth ;
 Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

IN MEMORIAM

A. H. H.

OBIIIT MDCCCXXXIII.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
 To one clear harp in divers tones,
 That men may rise on stepping-stones
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
 And find in loss a gain to match ?
 Or reach a hand through time to catch
 The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
 Let darkness keep her raven gloss ;
 Ah ! sweeter to be drunk with loss,
 To dance with death, to beat the ground ;

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
 The long result of love, and boast :
 “ Behold the man that loved and lost,
 But all he was is overworn.”

II.

OLD Yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the under-lying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head ;
Thy roots are wrapped about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock ;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale !
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

And gazing on the sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood,
And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O SORROW, cruel fellowship !

O Priestess in the vaults of Death !

O sweet and bitter in a breath,

What whispers from thy lying lip ?

“ The stars,” she whispers, “ blindly run ;

A web is woven across the sky ;

From out waste places comes a cry,

And murmurs from the dying sun :

“ And all the phantom, Nature, stands, —

With all her music in her tone,

A hollow echo of my own, —

A hollow form with empty hands.”

And shall I take a thing so blind,

Embrace her as my natural good ;

Or crush her, like a vice of blood,

Upon the threshold of the mind ?

IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away ;
My will is bondsman to the dark ;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse, and say :

“ O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire
What is it makes me beat so low ? ”

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost !

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darkened eyes ;
With morning wakes the will, and cries,
“ Thou shall not be the fool of loss.”

v.

I SOMETIMES hold it half a sin
 To put in words the grief I feel ;
 For words, like nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
 A use in measured language lies ;
 The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I 'll wrap me o'er,
 Like coarsest clothes against the cold ;
 But that large grief which these infold
Is given in outline and no more.

VI.

ONE writes, that " Other friends remain,"
 That " Loss is common to the race," —
 And common is the commonplace,
 And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
 My own less bitter, rather more :
 Too common ! Never morning wore
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
 That pledgest now thy gallant son ;
 A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
 Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
 Thy sailor, while thy head is bowed,
 His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well ;
Who mused on all I had to tell,
And something written, something thought ;

Expecting still his advent home ;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,
Or here to-morrow will he come.

O, somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest 'ranging golden hair ;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love !

For now her father's chimney glows
In expectation of a guest ;
And thinking " this will please him best,"
She takes a ribbon or a rose ;

For he will see them on to-night ;
And with the thought her color burns ;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right ;

And, even when she turned, the curse
 Had fallen, and her future lord
 Was drowned in passing through the ford,
Or killed in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end ?
 And what to me remains of good ?
 To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me, no second friend.

VII.

DARK house, by which once more I stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasped no more, —
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly through the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

VIII.

A HAPPY lover who has come
 To look on her that loves him well,
 Who lights and rings the gateway bell
And learns her gone and far from home,

He saddens, all the magic light
 Dies off at once from bower and hall,
 And all the place is dark, and all
The chambers emptied of delight ;

So find I every pleasant spot
 In which we two were wont to meet,
 The field, the chamber, and the street,
For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
 In those deserted walks, may find
 A flower beat with rain and wind,
Which once she fostered up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret,
 O my forsaken heart, with thee
 And this poor flower of poesy
Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanished eye
 I go to plant it on his tomb,
 That if it can it there may bloom,
Or dying there at least may die.

IX.

FAIR ship, that from the Italian shore
 Sailest the placid ocean-plains
 With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
 Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
 In vain ; a favorable speed
 Ruffle thy mirrored mast, and lead
 Through prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
 Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
 As our pure love, through early light
 Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow ;
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
 My friend, the brother of my love.

My Arthur ! whom I shall not see

Till all my widowed race be run ;

Dear as the mother to the son,

More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I HEAR the noise about thy keel ;
 I hear the bell struck in the night ;
 I see the cabin-window bright ;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bringest the sailor to his wife,
 And travelled men from foreign lands ;
 And letters unto trembling hands ;
And, thy dark freight, a vanished life.

So bring him : we have idle dreams :
 This look of quiet flatters thus
 Our home-bred fancies : O, to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
 That takes the sunshine and the rains,
 Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom deep in brine ;
And hands so often clasped in mine
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI.

CALM is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only through the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground :

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on these dews that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps, with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main :

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall ;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair :

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII.

Lo ! as a dove when up she springs
 To bear through Heaven a tale of woe,
 Some dolorous message knit below
The wild pulsation of her wings ;

Like her I go : I cannot stay ;
 I leave this mortal ark behind,
 A weight of nerves without a mind,
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean mirrors rounded large,
 And reach the glow of southern skies,
 And see the sails at distance rise,
And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying, " Comes he thus, my friend ?
 Is this the end of all my care ? "
 And circle moaning in the air :
" Is this the end ? Is this the end ? "

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn,
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

TEARS of the widower, when he sees
 A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
 And moves his doubtful arms, and feels
Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
 A void where heart on heart reposed ;
 And, where warm hands have pressed and closed,
Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
 An awful thought, a life removed,
 The human-hearted man I loved,
A spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me many years
 I do not suffer in a dream ;
 For now so strange do these things seem,
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;

My fancies time to rise on wing,
And glance about the approaching sails,
As though they brought but merchants' bales,
And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touched the land to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port,

And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the plank,
And beckoning unto those they know,

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half divine ;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had drooped of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
And marvel what possessed my brain ;

And I perceive no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

TO-NIGHT the winds began to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day :
The last red leaf is whirled away,
The rooks are blown about the skies ;

The forest cracked, the waters curled,
The cattle huddled on the lea ;
And wildly dashed on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world :

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud ;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

WHAT words are these have fallen from me ?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or sorrow such a changeling be ?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or storm ;
But knows no more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark
Hung in the shadow of a heaven ?
Or has the shock, so harshly given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
And staggers blindly ere she sink ?
And stunned me from my power to think
And all my knowledge of myself ;

And made me that delirious man
Whose fancy fuses old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

THOU comest, much wept for : such a breeze
Compelled thy canvas, and my prayer
Was as the whisper of an air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
Through circles of the bounding sky ;
Week after week : the days go by :
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou mayst roam,
My blessing, like a line of light,
Is on the waters day and night,
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
Mid-ocean spare thee, sacred bark ;
And balmy drops in summer dark
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
Such precious relics brought by thee ;
The dust of him I shall not see
Till all my widowed race be run.

XVIII.

'T IS well, 't is something, we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

'T is little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah ! yet, even yet, if this might be,
I, falling on his faithful heart,
Would breathing through his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me :

That dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind,
Treasuring the look it cannot find,
The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

THE Danube to the Severn gave
The darkened heart that beat no more ;
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills,
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hushed nor moved along ;
And hushed my deepest grief of all,
When filled with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls :
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

XX.

THE lesser griefs that may be said,
That breathe a thousand tender vows,
Are but as servants in a house
Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,
And weep the fulness from the mind :
“ It will be hard,” they say, “ to find
Another service such as this.”

My lighter moods are like to these,
That out of words a comfort win ;
But there are other griefs within,
And tears that at their fountain freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,
And scarce endure to draw the breath,
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

But open converse is there none,
So much the vital spirits sink
To see the vacant chair, and think,
“How good ! how kind ! and he is gone.”

XXI.

I SING to him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me wave,
I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
And sometimes harshly will he speak :
“ This fellow would make weakness weak,
And melt the waxen hearts of men.”

Another answers, “ Let him be,
He loves to make parade of pain,
That with his piping he may gain
The praise that comes to constancy.”

A third is wroth : “ Is this an hour
For private sorrow's barren song,
When more and more the people throng
The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

“ A time to sicken and to swoon,
When science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and charms
Her secret from the latest moon ? ”

Behold, ye speak an idle thing :
Ye never knew the sacred dust :
I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing :

And unto one her note is gay,
For now her little ones have ranged ;
And unto one her note is changed,
Because her brood is stolen away.

XXII.

THE path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Through four sweet years arose and fell,
From flower to flower, from snow to snow :

And we with singing cheered the way,
And, crowned with all the season lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May :

But where the path we walked began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended, following Hope,
There sat the Shadow feared of man ;

Who broke our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold ;
And wrapped thee formless in the fold,
And dulled the murmur on thy lip ;

And bore thee where I could not see
Nor follow, though I walk in haste ;
And think that, somewhere in the waste,
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
Or breaking into song by fits ;
Alone, alone, to where he sits,
The Shadow cloaked from head to foot

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
I wander, often falling lame,
And looking back to whence I came,
Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, how changed from where it ran
Through lands where not a leaf was dumb ;
But all the lavish hills would hum
The murmur of a happy Pan :

When each by turns was guide to each,
And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
And Thought leapt out to wed with Thought,
Ere thought could wed itself with Speech :

And all we met was fair and good,
And all was good that Time could bring,
And all the secret of the Spring
Moved in the chambers of the blood :

And many an old philosophy
On Argive heights divinely sang,
And round us all the thicket rang
To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

AND was the day of my delight
As pure and perfect as I say ?
The very source and fount of Day
Is dashed with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,
This earth had been the Paradise
It never looked to human eyes
Since Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief
Hath stretched my former joy so great ?
The lowness of the present state,
That sets the past in this relief ?

Or that the past will always win
A glory from its being far ;
And orb into the perfect star
We saw not, when we moved therein ?

XXV.

I KNOW that this was Life, — the track
Whereon with equal feet we fared ;
And then, as now, the day prepared
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
As light as carrier-birds in air ;
I loved the weight I had to bear,
Because it needed help of Love :

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
When mighty Love would cleave in twain
The lading of a single pain,
And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

STILL onward winds the dreary way ;
 I with it ; for I long to prove
 No lapse of moons can canker Love,
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
 And goodness, and hath power to see
 Within the green the mouldered tree,
 And towers fallen as soon as built, —

O, if indeed that eye foresee
 Or see (in Him is no before)
 In more of life true life no more,
 And Love the indifference to be,

So might I find, ere yet the morn
 Breaks hither over Indian seas,
 That Shadow waiting with the keys,
 To cloak me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I ENVY not in any moods

 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes

 His license in the field of time,
 Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,

 The heart that never plighted troth,
 But stagnates in the weeds of sloth,
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;

 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
 'T is better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.

THE time draws near the birth of Christ :
The moon is hid ; the night is still ;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound :

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and good-will, good-will and peace,
Peace and good-will, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wished no more to wake,
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again :

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they controlled me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touched with joy,
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

XXIX.

WITH such compelling cause to grieve
As daily vexes household peace,
And chains regret to his decease,
How dare we keep our Christmas eve ;

Which brings no more a welcome guest
To enrich the threshold of the night
With showered largess of delight,
In dance and song and game and jest.

Yet go, and while the holly-boughs
Entwine the cold baptismal font,
Make one wreath more for Use and Wont
That guard the portals of the house ;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;
Why should they miss their yearly due
Before their time ? They too will die.

XXX.

WITH trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth ;
A rainy cloud possessed the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambolled, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the beech :
We heard them sweep the winter land ;
And in a circle hand in hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;
We sung, though every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept
Upon us : surely rest is meet :
“ They rest,” we said, “ their sleep is sweet,”
And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;
Once more we sang : “ They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they change ;

“ Rapt from the fickle and the frail,
With gathered power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil.

“ Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night :
O Father ! touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.”

XXXI.

WHEN Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
And home to Mary's house returned,
Was this demanded, — if he yearned
To hear her weeping by his grave ?

“ Where wert thou, brother, those four days ? ”
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbours met,
The streets were filled with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crowned
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ !
The rest remaineth unrevealed ;
He told it not ; or something sealed
The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.

HER eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth surpersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure ;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

XXXIII.

O THOU that after toil and storm
 Mayst seem to have reached a purer air,
 Whose faith has centre everywhere,
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
 Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
 Nor thou with shadowed hint confuse
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith through form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good.
 O, sacred be the flesh and blood
 To which she links a truth divine !

See, thou that countest reason ripe
 In holding by the law within,
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,
 And e'en for want of such a type.

XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is ;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty ; such as lurks
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I ?
'T were hardly worth my while to choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die ;

'T were best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head-foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness, and to cease.

XXXV.

YET if some voice that man could trust
Should murmur from the narrow house :
The cheeks drop in ; the body bows ;
Man dies : nor is there hope in dust :

Might I not say, yet even here,
But for one hour, O Love, I strive
To keep so sweet a thing alive ?
But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,
The sound of streams that swift or slow
Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
The dust of continents to be ;

And Love would answer with a sigh,
“ The sound of that forgetful shore
Will change my sweetness more and more,
Half dead to know that I shall die.”

O me ! what profits it to put
 An idle case ? If Death were seen
 At first as Death, Love had not been,
Or been in narrowest working shut,

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
 Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
 Had bruised the herb and crushed the grape,
And basked and battened in the woods.

XXXVI.

THOUGH truths in manhood darkly join,
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
 We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
 Where Truth in closest words shall fail,
 When Truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
 With human hands the creed of creeds
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
 Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
 And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.

URANIA speaks with darkened brow :

“Thou pratest here where thou art least ;
This faith has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou :

“Go down beside thy native rill,
On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
About the ledges of the hill.”

And my Melpomene replies,
A touch of shame upon her cheek :
“I am not worthy but to speak
Of thy prevailing mysteries ;

“For I am but an earthly Muse,
And owning but a little art
To lull with song an aching heart,
And render human love his dues ;

“ But brooding on the dear one dead,
And all he said of things divine,
(And dear as sacramental wine
To dying lips is all he said),

“ I murmured, as I came along,
Of comfort clasped in truth revealed ;
And loitered in the master's field,
And darkened sanctities with song.”

XXXVIII.

WITH weary steps I loiter on,
 Though always under altered skies
 The purple from the distance dies,
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
 The herald melodies of spring,
 But in the songs I love to sing
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
 Survive in spirits rendered free,
 Then are these songs I sing of thee
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

COULD we forget the widowed hour,
And look on Spirits breathed away,
As on a maiden in the day
When first she wears her orange-flower !

When crowned with blessing she doth rise
To take her latest leave of home,
And hopes and light regrets that come
Make April of her tender eyes ;

And doubtful joys the father move,
And tears are on the mother's face,
As parting with a long embrace
She enters other realms of love ;

Her office there to rear, to teach,
Becoming as is meet and fit
A link among the days, to knit
The generations each with each ;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
 A life that bears immortal fruit
 In such great offices as suit
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern !
 How often shall her old fireside
 Be cheered with tidings of the bride,
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,
 And bring her babe, and make her boast,
 Till even those that missed her most
Shall count new things as dear as old :

But thou and I have shaken hands,
 Till growing winters lay me low ;
 My paths are in the fields I know,
And thine in undiscovered lands.

XL.

THY spirit ere our fatal loss
Did ever rise from high to higher ;
As mounts the heavenward altar-fire,
As flies the lighter through the gross.

But thou art turned to something strange,
And I have lost the links that bound
Thy changes ; here upon the ground ;
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly ! yet that this could be, —
That I could wing my will with might
To leap the grades of life and light,
And flash at once, my friend, to thee :

For though my nature rarely yields
To that vague fear implied in death ;
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
The howlings from forgotten fields ;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
 An inner trouble I behold,
 A spectral doubt which makes me cold,
That I shall be thy mate no more,

Though following with an upward mind
 The wonders that have come to thee,
 Through all the secular to be,
But evermore a life behind.

XLI.

I vex my heart with fancies dim :
 He still outstripped me in the race ;
 It was but unity of place
That made me dream I ranked with him.

And so may Place retain us still,
 And he the much-beloved again,
 A lord of large experience, train
To riper growth the mind and will :

And what delights can equal those
 That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
 When one that loves, but knows not, reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows ?

XLII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Through all its intervital gloom
In some long trance should slumber on ;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the color of the flower :

So then were nothing lost to man ;
But that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began :

And love would last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

XLIII.

How fares it with the happy dead ?
For here the man is more and more ;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.

The days have vanished, tone and tint,
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense
Gives out at times (he knows not whence)
A little flash, a mystic hint ;

And in the long, harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethean springs)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O, turn thee round, resolve the doubt,
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLIV.

THE baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is pressed
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I":

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I," and "me,"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch":

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As through the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their due,
Had man to learn himself anew
Beyond the second birth of Death.

XLV.

WE ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and flower,
Is shadowed by the growing hour,
Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it: there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
But clear from marge to marge shall bloom
The eternal landscape of the past;

A lifelong tract of time revealed;
The fruitful hours of still increase;
Days ordered in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.

O Love! thy province were not large,
A bounded field, nor stretching far,
Look also, Love, a brooding star,
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVI.

THAT each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet :
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside ;
And I shall know him when we meet :

And we shall sit at endless feast,
Enjoying each the other's good ;
What vaster dream can hit the mood
Of Love on earth ? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,
Before the spirits fade away,
Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
“ Farewell ! We lose ourselves in light.”

XLVII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
 Were taken to be such as closed
 Grave doubts and answers here proposed,
 Then these were such as men might scorn :

Her care is not to part and prove ;
 She takes, when harsher moods remit,
 What slender shade of doubt may flit,
 And makes it vassal unto love :

And hence, indeed, she sports with words ;
 But better serves a wholesome law,
 And holds it sin and shame to draw
 The deepest measure from the chords :

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
 But rather loosens from the lip
 Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
 Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLVIII.

FROM art, from nature, from the schools,
Let random influences glance,
Like light in many a shivered lance
That breaks about the dappled pools :

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,
The slightest air of song shall breathe,
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
But blame not thou the winds that make
The seeming-wanton ripple break,
The tender-pencilled shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears,
Ay me ! the sorrow deepens down,
Whose muffled motions blindly drown
The bases of my life in tears.

XLIX.

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle ; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is racked with pangs that conquer trust,
And time, a maniac, scattering dust,
And life, a Fury, slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low, dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

L.

Do we indeed desire the dead
 Should still be near us at our side ?
 Is there no baseness we would hide ?
 No inner vileness that we dread ?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
 I had such reverence for his blame,
 See with clear eye some hidden shame,
 And I be lessened in his love ?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue :
 Shall love be blamed for want of faith ?
 There must be wisdom with great Death ;
 The dead shall look me through and through.

Be near us when we climb or fall :
 Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
 With larger, other eyes than ours,
 To make allowance for us all.

LI.

I CANNOT love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved ;
My words are only words, and moved
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

“ Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,”
The Spirit of true love replied ;
“ Thou canst not move me from thy side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong.

“ What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears ?
What record ? not the sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue ;

“ So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dashed with flecks of sin.
Abide : thy wealth is gathered in,
When Time hath sundered shell from pearl.”

LII.

How many a father have I seen,
 A sober man, among his boys,
 Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
 Who wears his manhood hale and green ;

And dare we to this doctrine give,
 That had the wild oat not been sown,
 The soil, left barren, had not grown
 The grain by which a man may live ?

O, if we held the doctrine sound
 For life outliving heats of youth,
 Yet who would preach it as a truth
 To those that eddy round and round ?

Hold thou the good : define it well :
 For fear divine philosophy
 Should push beyond her mark, and be
 Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

LIII.

O, YET we trust that somehow good
 Will be the final goal of ill,
 To pangs of nature, sins of will,
 Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
 That not one life shall be destroyed,
 Or cast as rubbish to the void,
 When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
 That not a moth with vain desire
 Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
 Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold ! we know not any thing ;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last, — far off, — at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?

 An infant crying in the night :

 An infant crying for the light :

And with no language but a cry.

LIV.

THE wish, that of the living whole
 No life may fail beyond the grave, —
 Derives it not from what we have
 The likest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
 So careful of the type she seems,
 So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
 She often brings but one to bear ;

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope through darkness up to God ;

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LV.

“So careful of the type?” but no.
 From scarped cliff and quarried stone
 She cries, “A thousand types are gone :
 I care for nothing, all shall go.

“Thou makest thine appeal to me :
 I bring to life, I bring to death :
 The spirit does but mean the breath :
 I know no more.” And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
 Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
 Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,
 Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
 And love Creation’s final law,—
 Though Nature, red in tooth and claw
 With ravine, shrieked against his creed,—

Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
 Who battled for the True, the Just,
 Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills ?

No more ? A monster then, a dream,
 A discord. Dragons of the prime,
 That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
 What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVI.

PEACE, come away : the song of woe
 Is after all an earthly song :
 Peace, come away ; we do him wrong
To sing so wildly ; let us go.

Come, let us go, your cheeks are pale,
 But half my life I leave behind ;
 Methinks my friend is richly shrined,
But I shall pass ; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears till hearing dies,
 One set slow bell will seem to toll
 The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever looked with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
 Eternal greetings to the dead ;
 And " Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
" Adieu, adieu," for evermore !

LVII.

IN those sad words I took farewell :
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
Of hearts that beat from day to day,
Half-conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall cease.

The high Muse answered : “ Wherefore grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave.”

LVIII.

HE passed ; a soul of nobler tone :
 My spirit loved and loves him yet,
 Like some poor girl whose heart is set
On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
 She finds the baseness of her lot ;
 Half jealous of she knows not what,
And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn ;
 She sighs amid her narrow days,
 Moving about the household ways,
In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbours come and go,
 And tease her till the day draws by ;
 At night she weeps, “ How vain am I !
How should he love a thing so low ? ”

LIX.

If, in thy second state sublime,
Thy ransomed reason change replies
With all the circle of the wise,
The perfect flower of human time ;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,
How dimly characterized and slight,
How dwarfed a growth of cold and night,
How blanched with darkness must I grow !

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
Where thy first form was made a man ;
I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakspeare love thee more.

LX.

THOUGH if an eye that 's downward cast
 Could make thee somewhat blench or fail,
 So be my love an idle tale,
And fading legend of the past ;

And thou, as one that once declined,
 When he was little more than boy,
 On some unworthy heart with joy,
But lives to wed an equal mind ;

And breathes a novel world, the while
 His other passion wholly dies,
 Or in the light of deeper eyes
Is matter for a flying smile.

LXI

YET pity for a horse o'erdriven,
And love in which my hound has part,
Can hang no weight upon my heart
In its assumptions up to heaven ;

And I am so much more than these,
As thou, perchance, art more than I,
And yet I spare them sympathy,
And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I weep,
As, unto vaster motions bound,
The circuits of thine orbit round
A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXII.

Dost thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began,
And on a simple village green ;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne ;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire ;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
 When all his active powers are still,
 A distant dearness in the hill,
A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
 While yet beside its vocal springs
 He played at counsellors and kings,
With one that was his earliest mate ;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea,
 And reaps the labor of his hands,
 Or in the furrow musing stands :
“ Does my old friend remember me ? ”

LXIII.

SWEET soul ! do with me as thou wilt ;
I lull a fancy trouble-tost
With " Love 's too precious to be lost,
A little grain shall not be spilt."

And in that solace can I sing,
Till out of painful phases wrought
There flutters up a happy thought,
Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :

Since we deserved the name of friends,
And thine effect so lives in me,
A part of mine may live in thee,
And move thee on to noble ends.

LXIV.

You thought my heart too far diseased ;
 You wonder when my fancies play
 To find me gay among the gay,
Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crossed,
 Which makes a desert in the mind,
 Has made me kindly with my kind,
And like to him whose sight is lost ;

Whose feet are guided through the land,
 Whose jest among his friends is free,
 Who takes the children on his knee,
And winds their curls about his hand :

He plays with threads, he beats his chair
 For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;
 His inner day can never die,
His night of loss is always there.

LXV.

WHEN on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest,
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;
And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipped in gray :

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the chancel like a ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVI.

WHEN in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times my breath ;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :

I walk as ere I walked forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with dew,
And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :

But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXVII.

I DREAMED there would be Spring no more,
That Nature's ancient power was lost :
The streets were black with smoke and frost,
They chattered trifles at the door.

I wandered from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs :
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown.

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth and babe and hoary hairs :
They called me in the public squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns.

They called me fool, they called me child :
I found an angel of the night :
The voice was low, the look was bright,
He looked upon my crown and smiled :

He reached the glory of a hand,
 That seemed to touch it into leaf:
 The voice was not the voice of grief ;
The words were hard to understand.

LXVIII.

I CANNOT see the features right,
 When on the gloom I strive to paint
 The face I know ; the hues are faint
And mix with hollow masks of night :

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
 A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
 A hand that points, and palled shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;

And crowds that stream from yawning doors
 And shoals of puckered faces drive ;
 Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
And lazy lengths on boundless shores :

Till all at once beyond the will
 I hear a wizard music roll,
 And through a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXIX.

SLEEP, kinsman thou to death and trance
And madness, thou hast forged at last
A night-long Present of the Past
In which we went through summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?
So bring an opiate treble-strong,
Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong
That thus my pleasure might be whole ;

While now we talk as once we talked
Of men and minds, the dust of change,
The days that grow to something strange,
In walking as of old we walked

Beside the river's wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXX.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane ?

Day, when my crowned estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sickened every living bloom,
And blurred the splendor of the sun ;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
With thy quick tears that make the rose
Pull sideways, and the daisy close
Her crimson fringes to the shower ;

Who mightst have heaved a windless flame
Up the deep East, or, whispering, played
A checker-work of beam and shade
From hill to hill, yet looked the same,

As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;
 Day, marked as with some hideous crime,
 When the dark hand struck down through time,
And cancelled nature's best : but thou,

Lift as thou mayst thy burthened brows
 Through clouds that drench the morning star,
 And whirl the ungarnered sheaf afar,
And sow the sky with flying boughs,

And up thy vault with roaring sound
 Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day ;
 Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXXI.

So many worlds, so much to do,
 So little done, such things to be,
 How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true ?

The fame is quenched that I foresaw,
 The head hath missed an earthly wreath :
 I curse not nature ; no, nor death,
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass : the path that each man trod
 Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :
 What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age ? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
 Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
 And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXII.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
 To those that watch it more and more,
 A likeness hardly seen before -
Comes out, — to some one of his race :

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
 I see thee what thou art, and know
 Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
 And what I see I leave unsaid,
 Nor speak it, knowing Death has made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXIII.

I LEAVE thy praises unexpressed
 In verse that brings myself relief,
 And by the measure of my grief
I leave thy greatness to be guessed ;

What practice howsoe'er expert
 In fitting aptest words to things,
 Or voice the richest-toned that sings,
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

I care not in these fading days
 To raise a cry that lasts not long,
 And round thee with the breeze of song
To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perished in the green,
 And, while we breathe beneath the sun,
 The world which credits what is done
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame ;
 But somewhere, out of human view,
 Whate'er thy hands are set to do
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

LXXIV.

TAKE wings of fancy, and ascend,
 And in a moment set thy face
 Where all the starry heavens of space
 Are sharpened to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight : lighten through
 The secular abyss to come,
 And lo ! thy deepest lays are dumb
 Before the mouldering of a yew ;

And if the matin songs, that woke
 The darkness of our planet, last,
 Thine own shall wither in the vast,
 Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy bowers
 With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain ;
 And what are they when these remain
 The ruined shells of hollow towers ?

LXXV.

WHAT hope is here for modern rhyme
To him, who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
Foreshortened in the tract of time ?

These mortal lullabies of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks ;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells
A grief, — then changed to something else,
Sung by a long forgotten mind.

But what of that ? My darkened ways
Shall ring with music all the same ;
To breathe my loss is more than fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXVI.

AGAIN at Christmas did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas hearth,
 The silent snow possessed the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas eve ;

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
 No wing of wind the region swept,
 But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
 Again our ancient games had place,
 The mimic pictures breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who showed a token of distress ?
 No single tear, no type of pain :
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane ?
O grief, can grief be changed to less ?

O last regret, Regret can die !

No, — mixed with all this mystic frame,

Her deep relations are the same,

But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXVII.

“MORE than my brothers are to me,” —
Let this not vex thee, noble heart !
I know thee of what force thou art,
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in nature's mint ;
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curled
Through all his eddying coves ; the same
All winds that roam the twilight came
In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffered vows,
One lesson from one book we learned,
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turned
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
But he was rich where I was poor,
And he supplied my want the more
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXVIII.

If any vague desire should rise,
That holy Death ere Arthur died
Had moved me kindly from his side,
And dropped the dust on tearless eyes ;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
The grief my loss in him had wrought,
A grief as deep as life or thought,
But stayed in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain ;
I hear the sentence that he speaks ;
He bears the burthen of the weeks,
But turns his burthen into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;
And, influence-rich to soothe and save,
Unused example from the grave,
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXIX.

COULD I have said while he was here,
 “My love shall now no further range,
 There cannot come a mellow change,
For now is love mature in ear.”

Love, then, had hope of richer store :
 What end is here to my complaint ?
 This haunting whisper makes me faint,
“ More years had made me love thee more.”

But Death returns an answer sweet :
 “My sudden frost was sudden gain,
 And gave all ripeness to the grain,
It might have drawn from after-heat.”

LXXX.

I WAGE not any feud with Death
For changes wrought on form and face ;
No lower life that earth's embrace
May breed with him can fright my faith.

Eternal process moving on,
From state to state the spirit walks ;
And these are but the shattered stalks
Or ruined chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare
The use of virtue out of earth ;
I know transplanted human worth
Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
The wrath that garners in my heart ;
He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXI.

DIP down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new year, delaying long;
Thou doest expectant nature wrong,
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
Thy sweetness from its proper place?
Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the fox-glove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXII.

WHEN I contemplate, all alone,
 The life that had been thine below,
 And fix my thoughts on all the glow
 To which thy crescent would have grown ;

I see thee sitting crowned with good,
 A central warmth diffusing bliss
 In glance and smile, and clasp and kiss,
 On all the branches of thy blood ;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;
 For now the day was drawing on,
 When thou shouldst link thy life with one
 Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled " Uncle " on my knee ;
 But that remorseless iron hour
 Made cypress of her orange-flower,
 Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
 To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.
 I see their unborn faces shine
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honored guest,
 Thy partner in the flowery walk
 Of letters, genial table-talk,
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest :

While now thy prosperous labor fills
 The lips of men with honest praise,
 And sun by sun the happy days
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;
 And all the train of bounteous hours
 Conduct, by paths of growing powers,
To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
 Her lavish mission richly wrought,
 Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fail from off the globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,
 As linked with thine in love and fate,
 And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait
To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
 And he that died in Holy Land
 Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?
 Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake
 The old bitterness again, and break
The low beginnings of content?

LXXXIII.

THIS truth came borne with bier and pall,
 I felt it, when I sorrowed most,
 'T is better to have loved and lost,
 Than never to have loved at all ———

O true in word, and tried in deed,
 Demanding, so to bring relief
 To this which is our common grief,
 What kind of life is that I lead ;

And whether trust in things above
 Be dimmed of sorrow, or sustained,
 And whether love for him have drained
 My capabilities of love ;

Your words have virtue such as draws
 A faithful answer from the breast,
 Through light reproaches, half expressed,
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
 Till on mine ear this message falls,
 That in Vienna's fatal walls
 God's finger touched him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
 That range above our mortal state,
 In circle round the blessed gate,
 Received and gave him welcome there ;

And led him through the blissful climes,
 And showed him in the fountain fresh
 All knowledge that the sons of flesh
 Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remained, whose hopes were dim,
 Whose life, whose thoughts, were little worth,
 To wander on a darkened earth,
 Where all things round me breathed of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
 O heart, with kindest motion warm,
 O sacred essence, other form,
 O solemn ghost ! O crowned soul !

Yet none could better know than I,
 How much of act at human hands
 The sense of human will demands,
 By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
 I felt and feel, though left alone,
 His being working in mine own,
 The footsteps of his life in mine ;

A life that all the Muses decked
 With gifts of grace that might express
 All-comprehensive tenderness,
 All-subtilizing intellect :

And so my passion hath not swerved
 To works of weakness, but I find
 An image comforting the mind,
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
 That loved to handle spiritual strife,
 Diffused the shock through all my life,
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
 For other friends that once I met ;
 Nor can it suit me to forget
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
 To mourn for any overmuch ;
 I, the divided half of such
 A friendship as had mastered Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
 Eternal, separate from fears.
 The all-assuming months and years
 Can take no part away from this :

But Summer on the steaming floods,
 And Spring that swells the narrow brooks,
 And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
 That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
 Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
 My old affection of the tomb,
 And my prime passion in the grave :

My old affection of the tomb,
 A part of stillness, yearns to speak :
 “ Arise, and get thee forth and seek
 A friendship for the years to come.

“ I watch thee from the quiet shore ;
 Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;
 But in dear words of human speech
 We two communicate no more.”

And I, “ Can clouds of nature stain
 The starry clearness of the free ?
 How is it ? Canst thou feel for me
 Some painless sympathy with pain ? ”

And lightly does the whisper fall :
 “ ’Tis hard for thee to fathom this ;
 I triumph in conclusive bliss,
 And that serene result of all.”

So hold I commerce with the dead ;
 Or so methinks the dead would say ;
 Or so shall grief with symbols play,
 And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
 That these things pass, and I shall prove
 A meeting somewhere, love with love,
 I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
 I, clasping brother-hands, aver
 I could not, if I would, transfer
 The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
 The promise of the golden hours ?
 First love, first friendship, equal powers
 That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine that cannot but deplore,
 That beats within a lonely place,
 That yet remembers his embrace,
 But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, though widowed, may not rest
 Quite in the love of what is gone,
 But seeks to beat in time with one
 That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
 Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
 The primrose of the later year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXIV.

SWEET after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Through all the dewy-tasselled wood,
And shadowing down the horned flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and Death,
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas,
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

LXXXV.

I PASSED beside the reverend walls
 In which of old I wore the gown ;
 I roved at random through the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls ;

And heard once more in college fanes
 The storm their high-built organs make,
 And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazoned on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,
 The measured pulse of racing oars
 Among the willows ; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
 The same, but not the same ; and last
 Up that long walk of limes I passed,
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door :

I lingered ; all within was noise

Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys
That crashed the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band

Of youthful friends, on mind and art,

And labor, and the changing mart,

And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,

But send it slackly from the string ;

And one would pierce an outer ring,

And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he

Would cleave the mark. A willing ear

We lent him. Who, but hung to hear

The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point with power and grace,

And music in the bounds of law,

To those conclusions when we saw

The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXXXVI.

WILD bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden through the budded quicks,
O, tell me where the senses mix,
O, tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the dusking leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I, — my harp would prelude woe, —
I cannot all command the strings ;
The glory of the sum of things
Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXVII.

WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright :
And thou, with all thy breadth and height
Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How often, hither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows fair,
And shook to all the liberal air
The dust and din and steam of town :

He brought an eye for all he saw ;
He mixed in all our simple sports ;
They pleased him, fresh from brawling courts
And dusky purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
Immantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking through the heat !

O sound to rout the brood of cares,
 The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
 The gust that round the garden flew,
 And tumbled half the mellowing pears !

O bliss, when all in circle drawn
 About him, heart and ear were fed
 To hear him, as he lay and read
 The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,
 Or here she brought the harp and flung
 A ballad to the brightening moon :

Nor less it pleased, in livelier moods,
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
 And break the livelong summer day
 With banquet in the distant woods ;

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,
 Discussed the books to love or hate,
 Or touched the changes of the state,
 Or threaded some Socratic dream ;

But if I praised the busy town,
 He loved to rail against it still,
 For "ground in yonder social mill,
We rub each other's angles down,

And merge," he said, "in form and gloss
 The picturesque of man and man."
 We talked: the stream beneath us ran,
The wine-flask lying couched in moss,

Or cooled within the glooming wave,
 And last, returning from afar,
 Before the crimson-circled star
Had fallen into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
 We heard behind the woodbine veil
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,
And buzzings of the honeyed hours.

LXXXVIII.

HE tasted love with half his mind,
Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
Where nighest heaven, who first could fling
This bitter seed among mankind ;

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
Were closed with wail, resume their life,
They would but find in child and wife
An iron welcome when they rise :

'T was well, indeed, when warm with wine,
To pledge them with a kindly tear :
To talk them over, to wish them here,
To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who passed away,
Behold their brides in other hands :
The hard heir strides about their lands,
And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, though their sons were none of these,
Not less the yet-loved sire would make
Confusion worse than death, and shake
The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me :
Whatever change the years have wrought,
I find not yet one lonely thought
That cries against my wish for thee.

LXXXIX.

WHEN rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted thrush ;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March ;

Come, wear the form by which I know
Thy spirit in time among thy peers ;
The hope of unaccomplished years
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change
May breathe with many roses sweet
Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
That ripple round the lonely grange ;

Come : not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth warm,
Come, beauteous in thine after form,
And like a finer light in light.

XC.

If any vision should reveal
Thy likeness, I might count it vain
As but the canker of the brain ;
Yea, though it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
Together in the days behind,
I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, though it spake and bared to view
A fact within the coming year ;
And though the months, revolving near,
Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.

XCI.

I SHALL not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native land
Where first he walked when clasped in clay ?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may come
Where all the nerve of sense is numb;
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in unconjectured bliss,
O, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter ; hear
The wish too strong for words to name ;
That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCII.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
 With what divine affections bold,
 Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
 The spirits from their golden day,
 Except, like them, thou too canst say
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
 Imaginations calm and fair,
 The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest :

But when the heart is full of din,
 And doubt beside the portal waits,
 They can but listen at the gates
And hear the household jar within.

XCIII.

By night we lingered on the lawn,
For under foot the herb was dry ;
And genial warmth ; and o'er the sky
The silvery haze of summer drawn ;

And calm that let the tapers burn
Unwavering : not a cricket chirred :
The brook alone far off was heard,
And on the board the fluttering urn :

And bats went round in fragrant skies,
And wheeled or lit the filmy shapes
That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;

While now we sang old songs that pealed
From knoll to knoll, where, couched at ease,
The white kine glimmered, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me and night,
 And in the house light after light
 Went out, and I was all alone,

A hunger seized my heart ; I read
 Of that glad year which once had been,
 In those fallen leaves which kept their green,
 The noble letters of the dead :

And strangely on the silence broke
 The silent-speaking words, and strange
 Was love's dumb cry defying change
 To test his worth ; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell
 On doubts that drive the coward back,
 And keen through wordy snares to track
 Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
 The dead man touched me from the past,
 And all at once it seemed at last
 His living soul was flashed on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and whirled
 About empyreal heights of thought,
 And came on that which is, and caught
 The deep pulsations of the world,

Æonian music measuring out
 The steps of Time, — the shocks of Chance, —
 The blows of Death. At length my trance
 Was cancelled, stricken through with doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to frame
 In matter-moulded forms of speech,
 Or ev'n for intellect to reach
 Through memory that which I became :

Till now the doubtful dusk revealed
 The knolls once more where, couched at ease,
 The white kine glimmered, and the trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field :

And sucked from out the distant gloom,
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume ;

And gathering freshlier overhead,
 Rocked the full-foliaged elms, and swung
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung
The lilies to and fro, and said

“ The dawn, the dawn,” and died away ;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixed their dim lights, like life and death,
To broaden into boundless day.

XCIV.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
Are tender over drowning flies,
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew
In many a subtile question versed,
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true :

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them : thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own ;
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sināi's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold
Although the trumpet blew so loud.

XCV.

My love has talked with rocks and trees,
He finds on misty mountain-ground
His own vast shadow glory-crowned,
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life, —
I looked on these and thought of thee
In vastness and in mystery,
And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two, — they dwelt with eye on eye,
Their hearts of old have beat in tune,
Their meetings made December June,
Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never passed away ;
The days she never can forget
Are earnest that he loves her yet,
Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,
 Though rapt in matters dark and deep
 He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,
 He reads the secret of the star,
 He seems so near and yet so far,
 He looks so cold : she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
 A withered violet is her bliss ;
 She knows not what his greatness is ;
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
 Of early faith and plighted vows ;
 She knows but matters of the house,
 And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move,
 She darkly feels him great and wise,
 She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
 " I cannot understand : I love."

XCVI.

You leave us : you will see the Rhine,
 And those fair hills I sailed below,
 When I was there with him ; and go
 By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath,
 That City. All her splendor seems
 No livelier than the wisp that gleams
 On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
 Enwind her isles, unmarked of me :
 I have not seen, I will not see
 Vienna ; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, evil haunts
 The birth, the bridal ; friend from friend
 Is oftener parted, fathers bend
 Above more graves, a thousand wants

Gnar at the heels of men, and prey
By each cold hearth, and sadness flings
Her shadow on the blaze of kings :
And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
With statelier progress to and fro
The double tides of chariots flow
By park and suburb under brown

Of lustier leaves ; nor more content,
He told me, lives in any crowd,
When all is gay with lamps, and loud
With sport and song, in booth and tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain ;
And wheels the circled dance, and breaks
The rocket molten into flakes
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

XCVII.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,
 So loud with voices of the birds,
 So thick with lowings of the herds,
Day, when I lost the flower of men ;

Who tremblest through thy darkling red
 On yon swollen brook that bubbles fast
 By meadows breathing of the past,
And woodlands holy to the dead ;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves
 A song that slights the coming care,
 And Autumn laying here and there
A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
 To myriads on the genial earth,
 Memories of bridal, or of birth,
And unto myriads more, of death.

O, wheresoever those may be,
 Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
 To-day they count as kindred souls ;
They know me not, but mourn with me.

XCVIII.

I WAKE, I rise : from end to end,
Of all the landscape underneath
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend :

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnet trill,
Nor quarry trenched along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
To left and right through meadowy curves,
That feed the mothers of the flock ;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindlier day;
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die.

XCIX.

UNWATCHED the garden bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved that beech will gather brown,
This maple burn itself away ;

Unloved, the sunflower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air ;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the plain,
At noon, or when the lesser wain
Is twisting round the polar star ;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
And flood the haunts of hern and crake ;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild
 A fresh association blow,
 And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child ;

As year by year the laborer tills
 His wonted glebe, or lops the glades ;
 And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

c.

WE leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin-song, and heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung.

The other answers, " Yea, but here
Thy feet have strayed in after hours
With thy lost friend among the bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,
And each prefers his separate claim,
Poor rivals in a losing game,
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go : my feet are set
To leave the pleasant fields and farms ;
They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret.

CL.

ON that last night before we went
From out the doors where I was bred,
I dreamed a vision of the dead,
Which left my after morn content.

Methought I dwelt within a hall,
And maidens with me ; distant hills
From hidden summits fed with rills
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang.
They sang of what is wise and good
And graceful. In the centre stood
A statue veiled, to which they sang ;

And which, though veiled, was known to me,
The shape of him I loved, and love
For ever : then flew in a dove,
And brought a summons from the sea :

And when they learnt that I must go,
They wept and wailed, but led the way
To where a little shallop lay
At anchor in the flood below ;

And on by many a level mead,
And shadowing bluff that made the banks,
We glided, winding under ranks
Of iris, and the golden reed ;

And still as vaster grew the shore,
And rolled the floods in grander space,
The maidens gathered strength and grace
And presence, lordlier than before ;

And I myself, who sat apart
And watched them, waxed in every limb ;
I felt the thews of Anakim,
The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,
And one would chant the history
Of that great race, which is to be,
And one the shaping of a star ;

Until the forward-creeping tides
 Began to foam, and we to draw
 From deep to deep, to where we saw
 A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck,
 But thrice as large as man he bent
 To greet us. Up the side I went,
 And fell in silence on his neck :

Whereat those maidens with one mind
 Bewailed their lot ; I did them wrong :
 “ We served thee here,” they said, “ so long,
 And wilt thou leave us now behind ? ”

So rapt I was, they could not win
 An answer from my lips, but he
 Replying, “ Enter likewise ye
 And go with us ” : they entered in.

And while the wind began to sweep
 A music out of sheet and shroud,
 We steered her toward a crimson cloud
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CII.

THE time draws near the birth of Christ ;
The moon is hid, the night is still ;
A single church below the hill
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
That wakens at this hour of rest
A single murmur in the breast,
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unhallowed ground.

CIII.

THIS holly by the cottage-eave,
To-night, ungathered, shall it stand :
We live within the stranger's land,
And strangely falls our Christmas eve.

Our father's dust is left alone
And silent under other snows :
There in due time the woodbine blows,
The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse
The genial hour with mask and mime ;
For change of place, like growth of time,
Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,
By which our lives are chiefly proved,
A little spare the night I loved,
And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm :
For who would keep an ancient form
Through which the spirit breathes no more ?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast,
Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown ;
No dance, no motion, save alone
What lightens in the lucid east

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
Long sleeps the summer in the seed ;
Run out your measured arcs, and lead
The closing cycle rich in good.

CIV.

RING out wild bells to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light :
 The year is dying in the night ;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
 The year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no more ;
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife ;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times ;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite ;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CV.

It is the day when he was born,
 A bitter day that early sank
 Behind a purple-frosty bank
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves
 To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies
 The blast of North and East, and ice
Makes daggers at the sharpened eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
 To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
 Above the wood which grides and clangs
Its leafless ribs and iron horns

Together, in the drifts that pass,
 To darken on the rolling brine
 That breaks the coast. But fetch the wine,
Arrange the board and brim the glass ;

Bring in great logs and let them lie,
 To make a solid core of heat ;
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
Of all things ev'n as he were by :

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
 With books and music, surely we
 Will drink to him whate'er he be,
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVI.

I WILL not shut me from my kind,
 And, lest I stiffen into stone,
 I will not eat my heart alone,
 Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :

What profit lies in barren faith,
 And vacant yearning, though with might
 To scale the heaven's highest height,
 Or dive below the wells of Death ?

What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting hymns ?
 And on the depths of death there swims
 The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
 Of sorrow under human skies :
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CVII.

HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk
From household fountains never dry ;
The critic clearness of an eye,
That saw through all the Muses' walk ;

Seraphic intellect and force
To seize and throw the doubts of man ;
Impassioned logic, which outran
The hearer in its fiery course ;

High nature amorous of the good,
But touched with no ascetic gloom ;
And passion pure in snowy bloom
Through all the years of April blood ;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
Of freedom in her regal seat
Of England, not the schoolboy heat,
The blind hysterics of the Celt ;

And manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, unasked, in thine,
And find his comfort in thy face ;

All these have been, and thee mine eyes
Have looked on : if they looked in vain
My shame is greater who remain,
Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CVIII.

THY converse drew us with delight,
The men of rathe and riper years:
The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
The proud was half disarmed of pride,
Nor cared the serpent at thy side
To flicker with his treble tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
The flippant put himself to school
And heard thee, and the brazen fool
Was softened, and he knew not why ;

While I, thy dearest, sat apart,
And felt thy triumph was as mine ;
And loved them more, that they were thine,
The graceful tact, the Christian art ;

Not mine the sweetness or the skill,
But mine the love that will not tire,
And, born of love, the vague desire
That spurs an imitative will.

CIX.

THE churl in spirit up or down,
 Along the scale of ranks, through all
 To who may grasp a golden ball
 By blood a king, at heart a clown ;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
 His want in forms for fashion's sake,
 Will let his coltish nature break
 At seasons through the gilded pale :

For who can always act ? but he,
 To whom a thousand memories call,
 Not being less but more than all
 The gentleness he seemed to be,

So wore his outward best, and joined
 Each office of the social hour
 To noble manners, as the flower
 And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in light,

And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soiled with all ignoble use.

CX.

HIGH wisdom holds my wisdom less,
That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
On glorious insufficiencies,
Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room
Of all my love, art reason why
I seem to cast a careless eye
On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou ? some novel power
Sprang up for ever at a touch,
And hope could never hope too much,
In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,
And tracts of calm from tempest made,
And world-wide fluctuation swayed
In vassal tides that followed thought.

CXI.

'T is held that sorrow makes us wise ;
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with thee
 Which not alone had guided me,
But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt who knew thee keen
 In intellect, with force and skill
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil, —
I doubt not what thou wouldst have been :

A life in civic action warm,
 A soul on highest mission sent,
 A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
 Becoming, when the time has birth,
 A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With many shocks that come and go,
 With agonies, with energies,
 With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXII.

WHO loves not knowledge ? Who shall rail
 Against her beauty ? May she mix
 With men and prosper ! Who shall fix
 Her pillars ? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire :
 She sets her forward countenance
 And leaps into the future chance,
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain, —
 She cannot fight the fear of death.
 What is she, cut from love and faith,
 But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons ? fiery-hot to burst
 All barriers in her onward race
 For power. Let her know her place ;
 She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
 If all be not in vain ; and guide
 Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child :

For she is earthly of the mind,
 But wisdom heavenly of the soul.
 O friend, who camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
 Who grewest not alone in power
 And knowledge, but from hour to hour
In reverence and in charity.

CXIII.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drowned in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea ;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood ; that live their lives

From land to land ; and in my breast
 Spring wakens too ; and my regret
 Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXIV.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
 That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
 And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colors of the crescent prime ?

Not all : the songs, the stirring air,
 The life re-orient out of dust,
 Cry through the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret : the face will shine
 Upon me, while I muse alone ;
 The dear, dear voice that I have known
Will speak to me of me and mine :

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
 For days of happy commune dead ;
 Less yearning for the friendship fled,
Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXV.

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,
 To hold me from my proper place,
 A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss :

That out of distance might ensue
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet ;
 And unto meeting, when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
 And every span of shade that steals,
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,
And all the courses of the suns.

CXVI.

CONTEMPLATE all this work of time,
The giant laboring in his youth ;
Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying Nature's earth and lime ;

But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man ;

Who throve and branched from clime to clime,
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place,
If so he type this work of time .

Within himself, from more to more ;
And, crowned with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course, and show
That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears ;
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast ;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

CXVII.

Doors, where my heart was used to beat
 So quickly, not as one that weeps
 I come once more ; the city sleeps ;
I smell the meadow in the street ;

I hear a chirp of birds ; I see
 Betwixt the black fronts long withdrawn
 A light-blue lane of early dawn,
And think of early days and thee,

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,
 And bright the friendship of thine eye ;
 And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXVIII.

I TRUST I have not wasted breath :

I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death ;

Not only cunning casts in clay :

Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was born to other things.

CXIX.

SAD Hesper o'er the buried sun,
And ready, thou, to die with him,
Thou watchest all things ever dim
And dimmer, and a glory done :

The team is loosened from the wain,
The boat is drawn upon the shore ;
Thou listenest to the closing door,
And life is darkened in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
By thee the world's great work is heard
Beginning, and the wakeful bird ;
Behind thee comes the greater light :

The market-boat is on the stream,
And voices hail it from the brink ;
Thou hear'st the village hammer clink,
And seest the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name

For what is one, the first, the last,

Thou, like my present and my past,

Thy place is changed ; thou art the same.

CXX.

O, WAST thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my doom,
And strove to burst the folded gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
The strong-imagination roll
A sphere of stars about my soul,
In all her motion one with law ;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
Divide us not, be with me now,
And enter in at breast and brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quickened with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death ;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
And every dew-drop paints a bow;
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXI.

THERE rolls the deep where grew the tree.

O earth, what changes hast thou seen !

There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow

From form to form, and nothing stands ;

They melt like mist, the solid lands,

Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,

And dream my dream, and hold it true ;

For though my lips may breathe adieu,

I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXII.

THAT which we dare invoke to bless ;
Our dearest faith, our ghastliest doubt ;
He, They, One, All ; within, without ;
The Power in darkness whom we guess ;

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;
Nor through the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun :

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice, " Believe no more,"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, " I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear :
But that blind clamor made me wise ;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I seem beheld again
What is, and no man understands ;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach through nature, moulding men.

CXXIII.

WHATEVER I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would give,
Yea, though there often seemed to live
A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;
She did but look through dimmer eyes ;
Or Love but played with gracious lies,
Because he felt so fixed in truth :

And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song ;
And if the words were sweet and strong,
He set his royal signet there ;

Abiding with me till I sail
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
And this electric force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

CXXIV.

Love is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
And will be, though as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
That moves about from place to place,
And whispers to the vast of space
Among the worlds, that all is well.

CXXV.

AND all is well, though faith and form
 Be sundered in the night of fear ;
 Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
 And justice, ev'n though thrice again
 The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But woe to him that wears a crown,
 And him, the lazar, in his rags :
 They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
 The fortress crashes from on high,
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the vast Æon sinks in blood,

And compassed by the fires of Hell,
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVI.

THE love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpalsied when he met with Death,
Is comrade of the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt, vast eddies in the flood
Of onward time shall yet be made,
And throned races may degrade ;
Yet, O ye ministers of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and Fear,
If all your office had to do
With old results that look like new,
If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
To fool the crowd with glorious lies,
To cleave a creed in sects and cries,
To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,
 To cramp the student at his desk,
 To make old baseness picturesque
And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;

Why then my scorn might well descend
 On you and yours. I see in part
 That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil coöperant to an end.

CXXVII.

DEAR friend, far off, my lost desire,
 So far, so near, in woe and weal ;
 O, loved the most when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown, human, divine !
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye,
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine !

Strange friend, past, present, and to be,
 Loved deeplier, darklier understood ;
 Behold I dream a dream of good
And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXVIII.

THY voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
But though I seem in star and flower
To feel thee, some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
I have thee still, and I rejoice :
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
I shall not lose thee though I die.

CXXIX.

O LIVING will that shalt endure

When all that seems shall suffer shock,

Rise in the spiritual rock,

Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out the dust

A voice as unto him that hears,

A cry above the conquered years

To one that with us works, and trust

With faith that comes of self-control

The truths that never can be proved

Until we close with all we loved,

And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O TRUE and tried, so well and long,
 Demand not thou a marriage lay ;
 In that it is thy marriage day
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
 Since first he told me that he loved
 A daughter of our house ; nor proved
 Since that dark day a day like this ;

Though I since then have numbered o'er
 Some thrice three years : they went and came,
 Remade the blood and changed the frame,
 And yet is love not less, but more ;

No longer caring to embalm
 In dying songs a dead regret,
 But like a statue solid-set,
 And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
 Than in the summers that are flown,
 For I myself with these have grown
 To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I made
 As echoes out of weaker times,
 As half but idle brawling rhymes,
 The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
 That must be made a wife ere noon ?
 She enters, glowing like the moon
 Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes
 And then on thee ; they meet thy look
 And brighten like the star that shook
 Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O, when her life was yet in bud,
 He too foretold the perfect rose.
 For thee she grew, for thee she grows
 For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy ; full of power ;
 As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,
 Consistent ; wearing all that weight
 Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,
 And I must give away the bride ;
 She fears not, or with thee beside
 And me behind her, will not fear :

For I that danced her on my knee,
 That watched her on her nurse's arm,
 That shielded all her life from harm,
 At last must part with her to thee ;

Now waiting to be made a wife,
 Her feet, my darling, on the dead ;
 Their pensive tablets round her head,
 And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
 The " wilt thou " answered, and again
 The " wilt thou " asked, till out of twain
 Her sweet " I will " has made ye one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read
 Mute symbols of a joyful morn
 By village eyes as yet unborn ;
 The names are signed, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
 The joy to every wandering breeze ;
 The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
 The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
 Await them. Many a merry face
 Salutes them, — maidens of the place,
 That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
 With him to whom her hand I gave.
 They leave the porch, they pass the grave
 That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
 For them the light of life increased
 Who stay to share the morning feast,
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
 To meet and greet a whiter sun ;
 My drooping memory will not shun
The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
 And hearts are warmed and faces bloom,
 As drinking health to bride and groom
We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,
 Perchance, perchance, among the rest,
And, though in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
 And those white-favored horses wait ;
 They rise, but linger, it is late ;
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
 From little cloudlets on the grass,
 But sweeps away as out we pass
To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
 And talk of others that are wed,
 And how she looked, and what he said,
 And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
 The shade of passing thought, the wealth
 Of words and wit, the double health,
 The crowning cup, the three times three,

And last the dance ; — till I retire :
 Dumb is that tower which spake so loud,
 And high in heaven the streaming cloud,
 And on the downs a rising fire :

And rise, O moon, from yonder down, ·
 Till over down and over dale
 All night the shining vapor sail
 And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,
 And catch at every mountain head,
 And o'er the friths that branch and spread
 Their sleeping silver through the hills ;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
 With tender gloom the roof, the wall ;
 And breaking let the splendor fall
 To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
 And, star and system rolling past,
 A soul shall draw from out the vast
 And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved through life of lower phase,
 Result in man, be born and think,
 And act and love, a closer link
 Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
 On knowledge ; under whose command
 Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
 Is Nature like an open book ;

No longer half-akin to brute,
 For all we thought and loved and did,
 And hoped, and suffered, is but seed
 Of what in them is flower and fruit ;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

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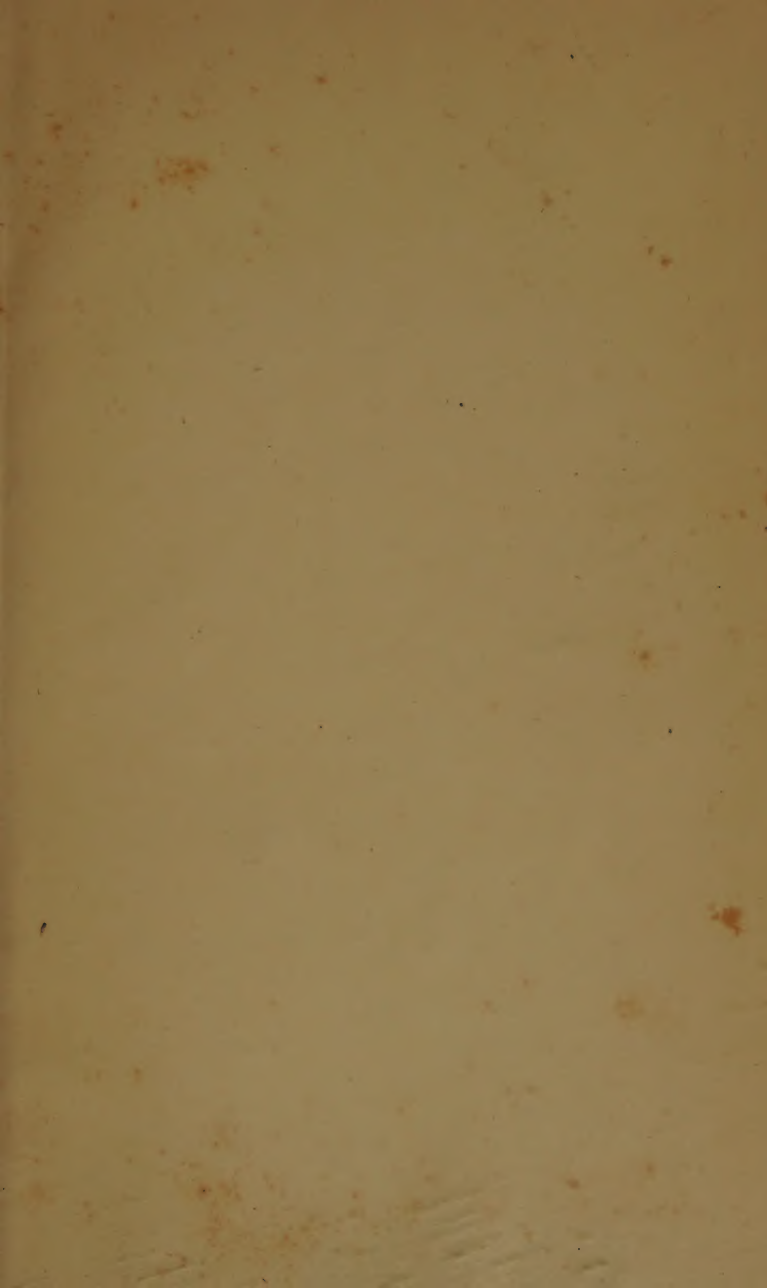
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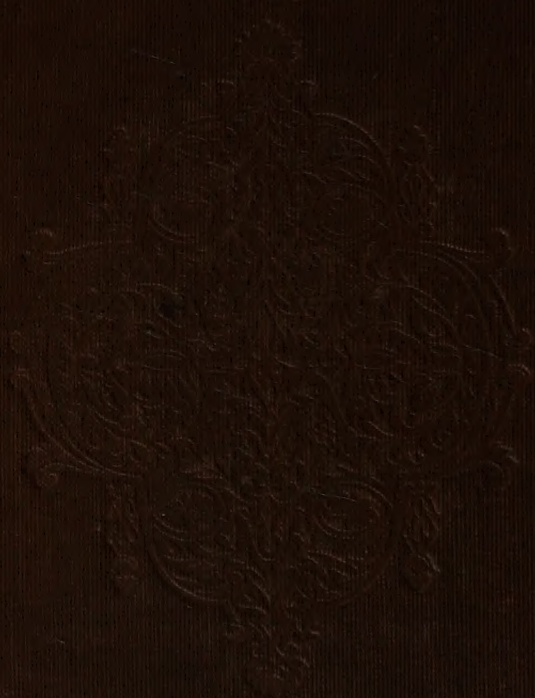
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